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PRESS RELEASE

USAID LAUNCHES 5-YEAR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR COMMUNITY LEADERS AND YOUTH

DHAKA JANUARY 17, --- The US Ambassador to Bangladesh Dan W. Mozena and the State Minister for Youth and Sports, Md. Ahad Ali Sarkar jointly inaugurated USAID's Leadership Development Program (LDP) in the Edward M. Kennedy center today. This newly launched five year program will prepare approximately 24,000 community leaders and Bangladeshi youth in 16 districts to become advocates for alleviating poverty, creating jobs, and protecting the environment.

In his inaugural remarks, Ambassador Mozena said 'The Leadership Development Program will help young people develop leadership skills, become community development change agents, and promote democratic processes.'

Implemented by Counterpart International in partnership with local civil society organizations, this program will train community leaders and youth through civic education, mentoring, internships and service learning activities to address local community development challenges. This program builds on the past experience of USAID's Leaders of Influence (LOI) program, which reached more than 20,000 community leaders between 2007 and 2011.

The U.S. Government, through USAID, has provided over \$6 billion in development assistance to Bangladesh since 1971. In 2012 alone, USAID provided more than \$200 million to improve the lives of people in Bangladesh. USAID supports programs in Bangladesh that: promote democratic institutions and practices, expand food security and economic opportunity, improve health and education services, and increase resiliency to climate change through adaptation and low carbon development.

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